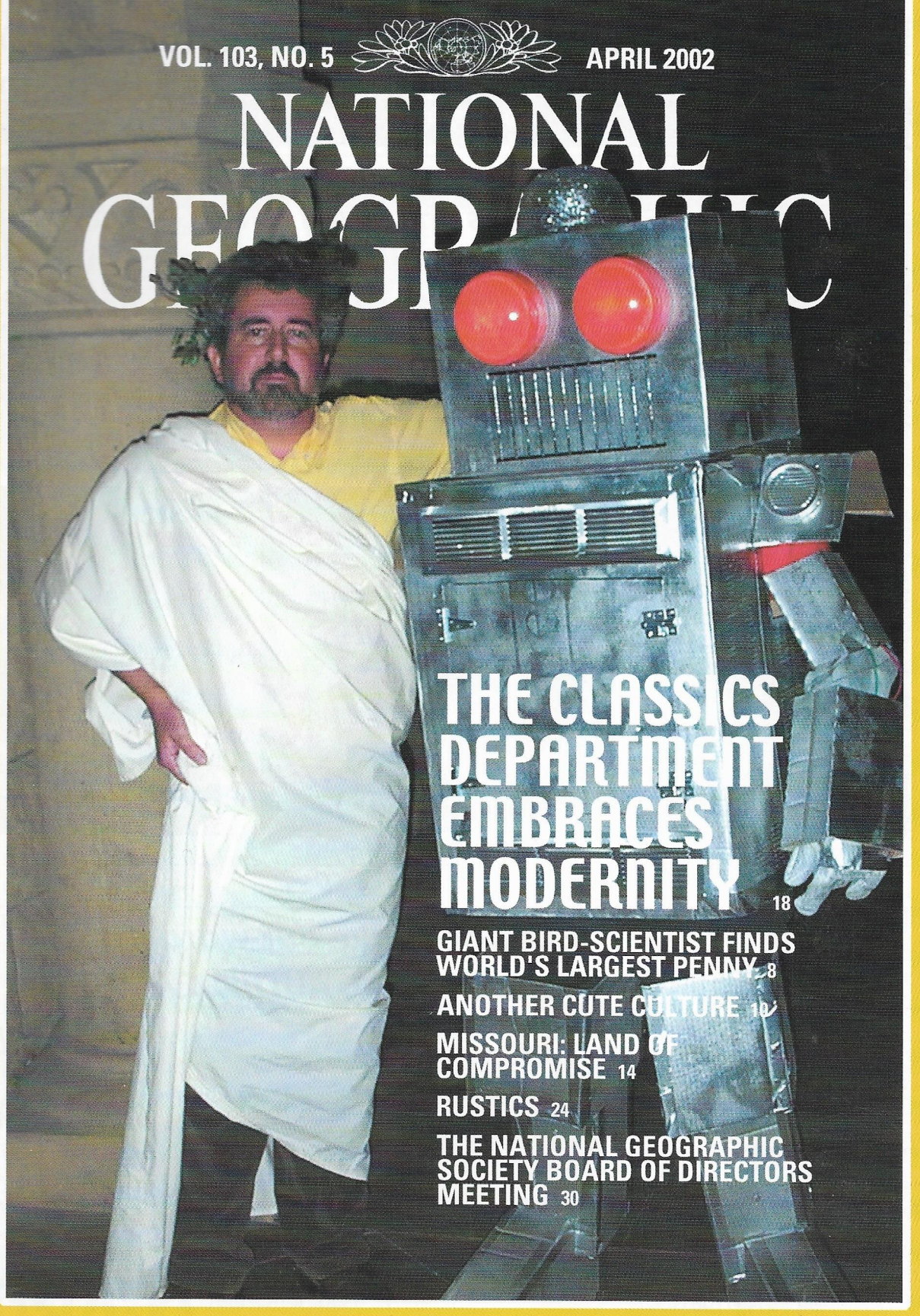


VOL. 103, NO. 5



APRIL 2002

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



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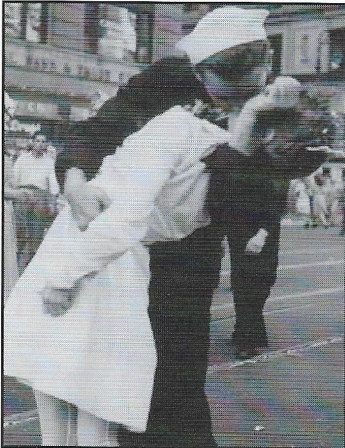
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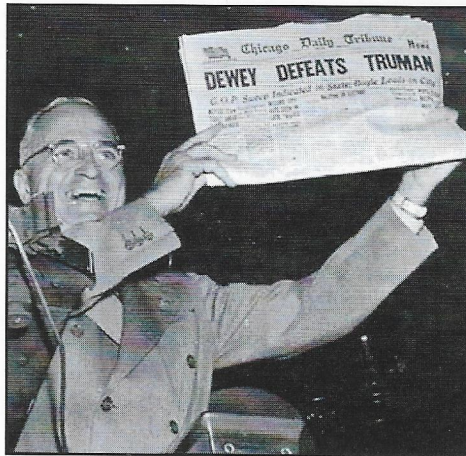


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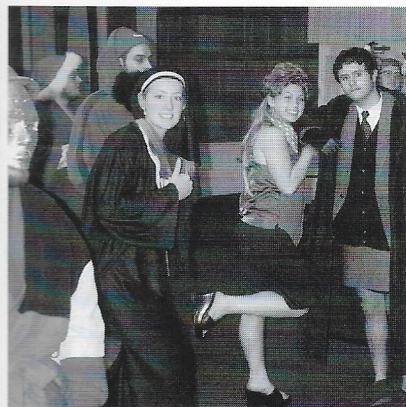
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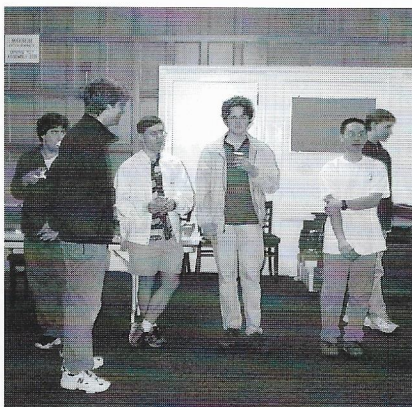
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Will the great National Geographic Society crumble like Rome or overcome its civil strife?

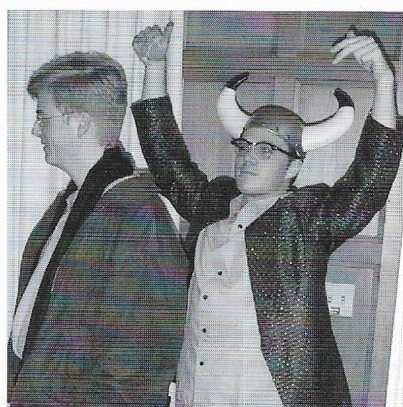
THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Seen here, the party faction is the traditional clan of the National Geographic Society.



The non-party faction of the NGS is headed by rebel leader John Kim, second from right.



Here I am unsuccessfully trying to reach out to the quiet, but dangerous non-party faction.

Now that you've picked up our fine magazine, you're probably looking forward to perusing our fascinating articles and humongous pictures. However, before you blissfully go ripping into the pages in a violently enthusiastic search for our special on the latest shenanigans in Afghanistan or the most recent tomfoolery in the West Indies, I think we all need to take a step back. As you'll learn in our ZipUSA feature (Missouri: Land of Compromise, page 14), things aren't always perfect, even in America. And, as I learned in a recent voyage across our staffroom, things aren't always perfect, even in our ancient and highly ritualistic National Geographic Society.

The Society began as a small clan of partiers and hooligans in the nurturing womb of Appalachia's most distinguished mountains. The peaceful and open people of the Society continued in this fashion undisturbed by enemies or even neighbors for hundreds of years.

All of that changed, however, one infamous day in early May when John Kim, once considered one of the Society's brightest Sons, inexplicably refused a beer AND a baseball cap emblazoned with the caption

"Fuck You," AND a key role in an upcoming dramatic re-enactment of the lunar landing using SCUBA gear and a SUV.

Since that day the society has slowly split into two factions with more and more non-partying faction members seeping out of the woodwork monthly. Though no shots have been fired nor direct threats made, tensions are rising. I fear that one day soon, this great society will crumble and the days of the free-roaming partying National Geographic Society Member will be over.

So, to make a long story short, please renew your subscription right away.

Gilbert W. Grosvenor



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

APRIL 2002

Giant Bird-Scientist Finds World's Largest Penny

By Dr. Dale McDougalforth
Photographs by Trent Devino



Finding a priceless treasure in Peru, the largest bird-scientist in the world ponders the true nature of this great discovery.
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Another Cute Culture

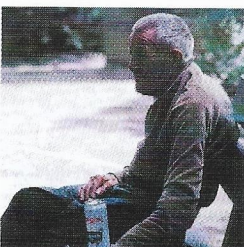
By Margie Wandril
Photographs by
I. S. Krautsworth



While the quaint people in a small desert country live less fulfilling lives than those in the West, they are still just as human.
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Missouri: Land of Compromise

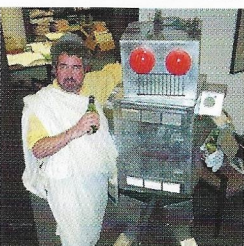
By Fender MacQuail
Photographs by
Joshua Bacantin, Jr.



In this issue's ZipUSA, we visit zip codes 63001 - 65801, the entire state of Missouri, and learn about this compromised state.
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The Classics Department Embraces Modernity

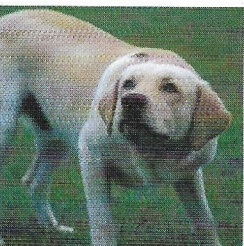
By Walter Scott Aspian
Photographs by
Greg Van Wangler



The Modern-o-bot 2000 almost meets its match in Professor Richard Martin when it tries to bring modernity to the Classics Department.
18

Rustics

By Handel Portsmouth
Photographs by Capt. Tim
Quiintan



City-folk may never be able to understand the ways of the rustics, but they certainly can take a colorful look at them.
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The National Geographic Society Board of Directors Meeting

By
Tannswith Thwickmersthy



A fascinating glimpse into the inner workings of the most powerful geographic society in the world.
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GEOFFREY S. SCHAEFFER, *Old Boy*
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NATIONAL
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SOCIETY

“Tis better to have lived
and laughed than never to
have lived at all.”

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Members Forum

I'm a ninety-year-old *Dermochelys Coriacea*, or giant sea turtle and usually only mate three times in my entire life. But ten years ago I was cruising at about 30 fathoms off the coast of Africa when I ran into these three HOT female giant sea turtles with longggg fins and bangin shells. Now this is already an amazing coincidence considering there are only five hundred surviving females in my species. But guess what happens next? These big mamas tell me they're all going to Ghana right now to lay thousands of eggs, and they need a big studly leatherback like me to help them fertilize. Now at this point I'm panting like a thirty-year-old school turtle, and all I can do is nod my cartilaginous head, and try to hide my swelling sexual organ, all one and a half inches of it! Sure enough we get to the beach and these babes went wild, I mean they must of been half snapping turtle if you know what I'm saying. They just laid eggs all over the place, burying them in the sand to tease me. I spent the rest of the night fertilizing their thousands of eggs. When I woke up the next morning they were all gone, presumably having returned to the ocean or having been eaten by the natives. So I guess it really can happen to anybody, as long as you have a hundred year lifespan to wait. P.S. I haven't gotten laid since then.

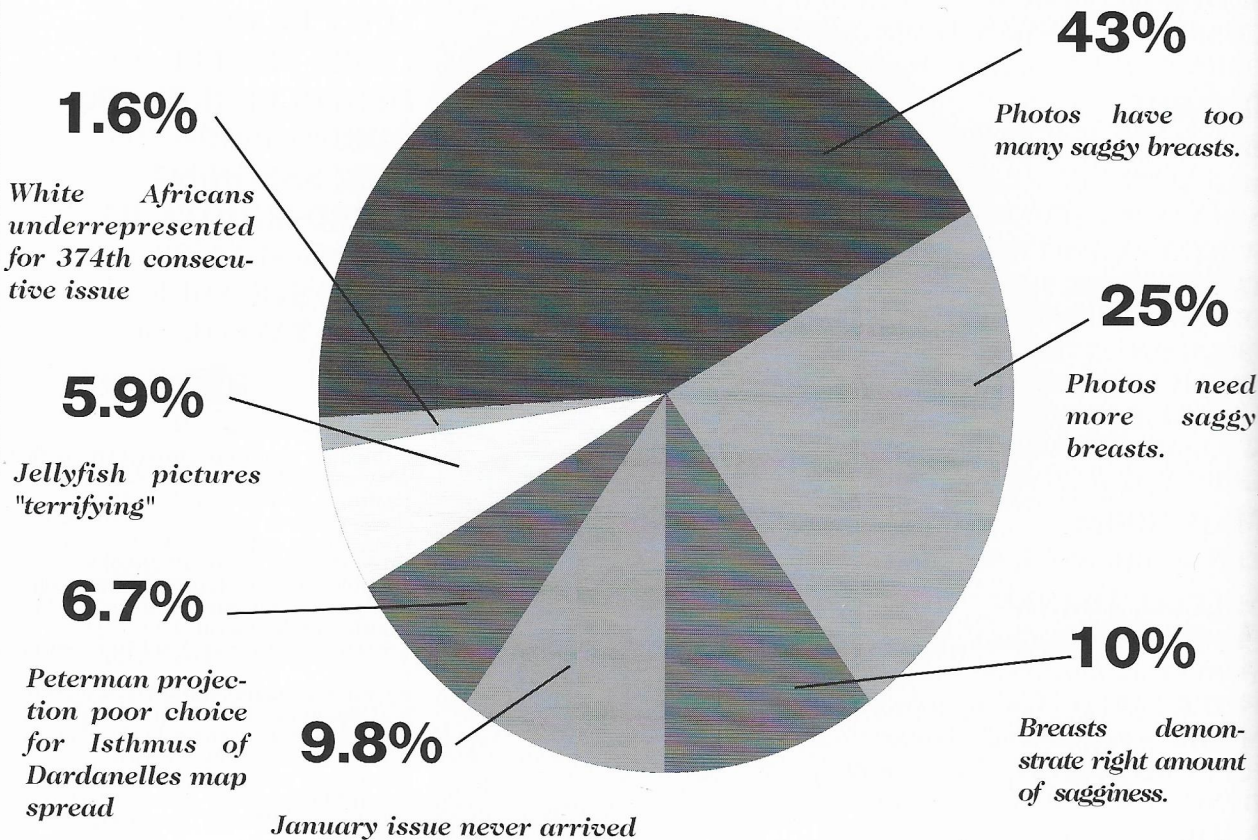
SHELLA' HORNY
Monterey Aquarium, CA

I'm a praying mantis, and I'm usually hesitant about just hooking up with females, because they try to eat your head while you're nailing them. But this one night I had had a few drinks, was feeling lucky and I saw this HOT mantis across the bar. I mean she had the best exoskeleton you've ever seen! And these real pouty mandibles that just screamed, "I'm want to eat you!" So I strut over there casually sticking out my thorax a little bit, you know, just being smooth. I ask her if I can get her a drink, and she says sure. We get to talking about where we're from, what we do for fun, eating small reptiles you know. Well anyway she ends up asking me if I want to go back to the rotting log where she nests. Now I'm pretty far gone at this point, I mean I'm seeing forty through my compound eyes, and I need all the stability my six legs offer, so I tell her I'm not sure I can fly that far. She says that's OK it's pretty close, and we end up walking back. Well to make a long story short, we get back to the log and start getting it on, I mean we're going crazy and I'm just giving it her mantis style. Well the next thing I remember is waking up the next morning and one of my legs is gone. Apparently, this girl was as wasted as I was and ate my leg instead of my head. Boy was I lucky, and the funniest part is I never even got her name!

STAYING ALIVE
Baltimore, MD

I'm a Berkshire hog with a fairly conservative upbringing, so I don't really date outside my breed. But last month I went out of town on some "Pork, the other white meat," promotion deal in Asia. Anyway, while there I spent a lot of time in the local mud pits, trying to pick up some of the region's filth. Well this one day I met these three HOT Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs just laying out in a

What Our Readers are Writing About



mixture of mud and feces. I mean these sows were so small and supple, with some rumps you just wouldn't believe. We get to talking, and they find out I'm from the states and just go nuts. "Is it true that every pig in America has their own truck? Is it true that you get to just lay in a crate all day, being fed through a straw while they genetically enhance you to have no teeth?" Yeah, yeah, it's all true I said. Well, all of a sudden all three get this kind of seductive look in their eyes, and start rubbing my snout with their hooves and chewing on my ears and stuff. I'll spare you what happened next, cause frankly pig sex is pretty nasty, but believe me it was great. I still only date Berkshires, and have never told anyone about my crossbreeding, but I'll never forget that sweltering, sticky day in Thailand.

HOG WILD FOR THE
ASIAN PERSUASION
Wilmington, NC

I'm just an ordinary gold fish who never gets out of the bowl. But I just love looking at the bomb pictures of exotic fish in your magazine, and those bios you write up on em are HOT. Anyway, to make a long story short here is \$36.95 to renew my subscription. Keep em rolling.

ENJOYING YOUR
MAGAZINE
Chicago, IL

In response to your article, "Tribes of The Ivory Coast," I think you guys are phoning it in. I saw the exact same picture of the girl with the lip disc eight years ago. Now, either she had an exact twin daughter, or else you guys are lazier than I thought. My cousin works as a receptionist in your New York headquarters. I caught

her picture in "Weavers of the Hidden Indian Isles." All you guys did was brown her up and photoshop a pattern over he desk to make it look like a loom. Do the Weavers of the Hidden Indian Isles have swingline staplers? I mean, I don't want to come off like a hard ass. I don't even subscribe. I just read this while waiting at my doctor's office, but I go there a lot for my Vee Dee...oops...looks like I'm on the hot seat now. Stop writing fingers. Just back away from the keyboard, Ms. Butterworth... err... umm... gee... I mean... butterFINGERS. PLBBT!

I'm just saying.

FRANK SINATRA
NO NOT THAT ONE!
JEEZUS PEEZUS! (PLBBT!)

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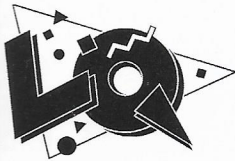
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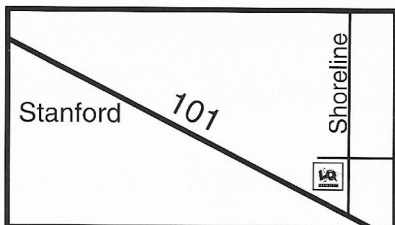


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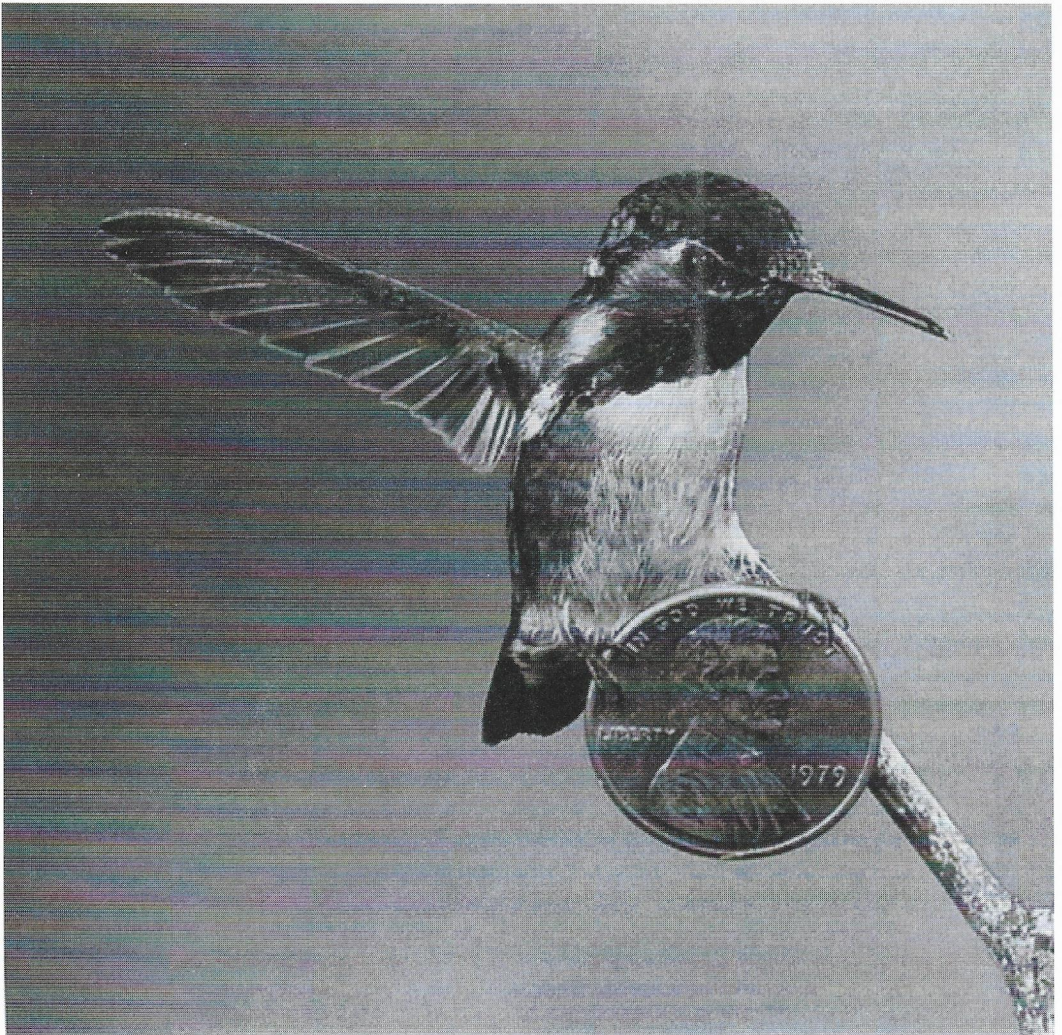
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Giant Bird-Scientist Finds World's Largest Penny

BY DR. DALE MCDUGALFORTH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRENT DEVING



Slogging through the remote jungle of Peru, my team and I were in search of treasure, not the sort you can use or resell, but the sort you can write about in National Geographic. And we were not disappointed.

Incredibly, the world's largest penny was found after only three days of digging. And, also incredibly, it was found by me, the world's largest bird-scientist/archaeologist.

The penny is North American in origin and in almost perfect condition. The date on the penny dates it to 1979. Catching the sun for the first time in nearly 23 years, the copper head glinted mystically in the morning light. The enormous countenance is frozen in a moment of eerie stoicism. One can only image what this giant copper-man was thinking at the time he became entombed in the world's largest penny. Perhaps he felt a little like me, the world's largest bird-scientist/archaeologist, when I wake up every morning, entombed in my many accomplishments.

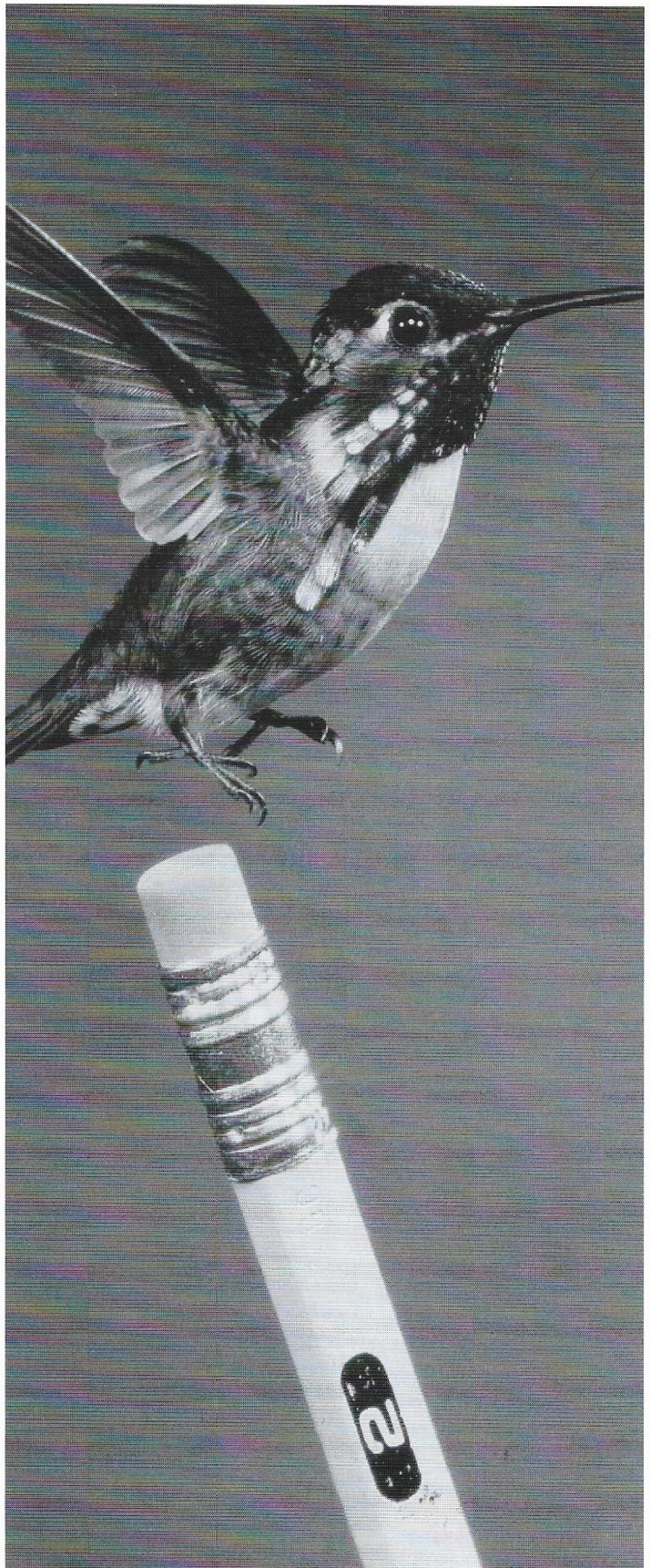
I doubt this ancient copper-man of 1979 could comprehend our modern world. Yet, I can't help but wonder what he would think of me, the world's largest bird-scientist/archaeologist, finding his majestic head and partial torso, some several years later. And not only that, but to find him encased and preserved so pristinely in the world's largest penny – truly remarkable.

Opposite:

Here I am, the world's largest bird-scientist/archaeologist excavating the world's largest penny. As you can see, the penny is approximately half the size of my gigantic body.

Right:

Among my many other accomplishments was my 1992 find of the world's largest pencil. Notice the markings on the pencil indicate it was built in 2 B.C. or possibly 2 A.D., making it at least 2000 years old.



In a small, desert country bracketed between the 30th and 39th parallels, the land is ravished by drought, the sky is seared by fire of distant missiles, and only half of the people know who Michael Jordan is. However, I, like many other of my National Geographic colleagues, have come to love the native people of this land in a way that is often patronizing and always high-handed.

While On Assignment, I lived with the Dushanbe family, a sprightly bunch of simple people with simple lives – from a litter of nearly 10 brothers and sisters, not one knew what cable TV was. Still, I was able to approve of their culture by relating to them as though they were simply endearing children while indirectly affirming the superiority of the Western way of life in a style that is uniquely National Geographic.

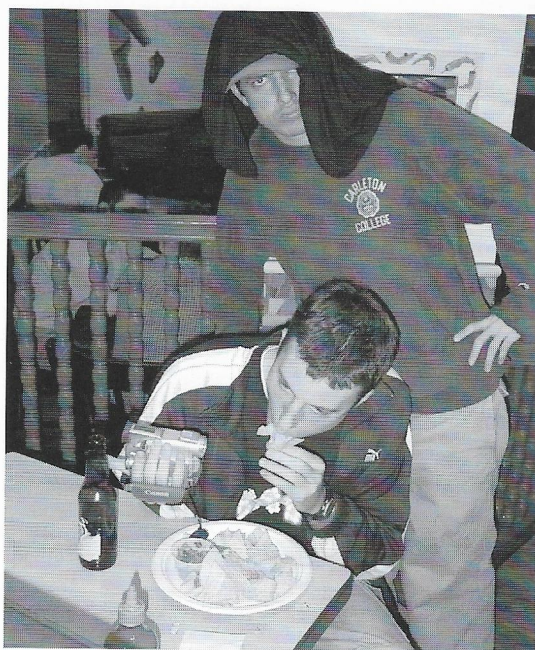
Another Cute Culture

BY MARGIE WANDRIL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY I. S. KRAUTSWORTH



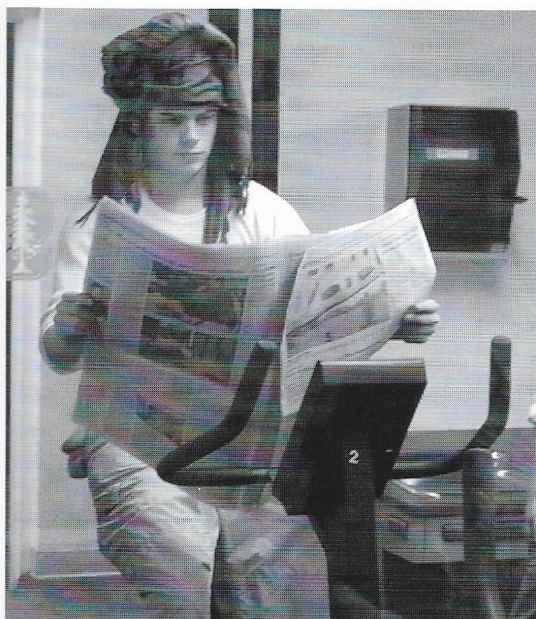
Expressive as a circus monkey, the youngest son, Sheberghan, greets his older sister, Amu Darya, from behind the glass of his pen at the zoo. Sheberghan has been at the zoo part-time since an early age.



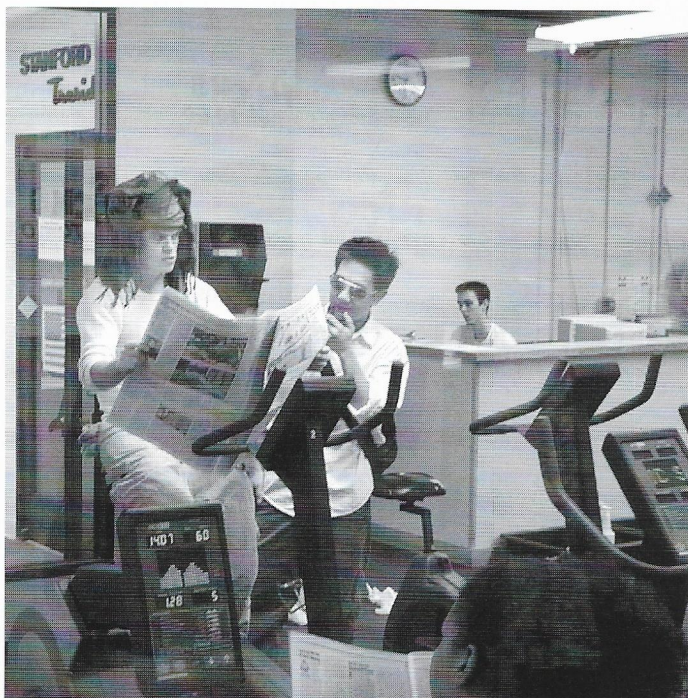
Meymaneh, Sheberghan's twin brother, is a film assistant on the movie, "birthday chip fantasy." The movie's director and star is Luke Horton, an Egyptian of British descent and the village's only card-carrying member (expired) of AAA.



Amu Darya plays the local version of the unparalleled Western classic game "hide-and-go-seek." The name of their game translates to "Stand and Deliver." But Edward James Olmos? Amu Darya has never even heard of him — she is truly precious.



Here I find the eldest son, Murgap, exercising, possibly as part of a terrorist training camp.



Ha ha! I find that even these people do not like to have newspapers read over their shoulders. Amazing! I guess we're all human after all.

Pioneers of Their Own Geography

Jack Staddon, 1989.



The original champion. Jack took a strange, poorly-publicized contest and turned it into the pre-eminent geographic title. He was not only the first winner to receive the contest's \$25,000 novelty check, but he also was the first to hold that novelty check high above his head, as if to symbolize the sheer height of flat intermontane area in the central Andes that was his winning answer, Altiplano.

Susannah Batko-Yovino, 1990.



When the Bee Geographic accidentally allowed a non-man to win, the legitimacy of the very contest was called into question. Everyone expected girls to be good at cartography or world trivia, but no one expected Susannah to take those two powerful ingredients and cook them into a geography championship.

David "Bo" Stillman, 1991.



Bo was the kind of geographer who could form grand canyons out of his Colorado river-mouth. He had an impossible irreverence for the metric system that flustered his opponents and challenged the square-box ways of metricists. He was the culmination of everything that was American about geography. However, much of the world still uses the metric system.

Lawson Fite, 1992.



Prophet, martyr, friend. Lawson was powerful in his knowledge of all things geographic, but all too aware of his own existential shortcoming. As if to symbolize his own weakness, Lawson shockingly allowed himself to miss a question in the second round. His novelty check was not only taken away; it was never even awarded.

Noel Erinjeri, 1993.



While Noel's mind was certainly unfit for high-stakes geographic competition, his pathway to the top was furnished by a small non-profit organization hoping to make his dreams come true. For ten days of competition, everything this boy said was true, even when it was wrong. When asked in the final round to name the largest estuary in the world, Noel clinched the title by frailly answering, "cancer."

Out of the sands of Kenya, forcing me to cover the thing...



Another Goddamn Human Skull Found

Paleoanthropologist Jessie Fullerton has found what is believed to be yet another ancient human ancestor— another link between apes and man, netting yet another 250-750 words out of this weary National Geographic reporter.

As usual, she found it in Africa— Kenya, to be exact, where these kinds of things always seem to turn up. Her 'crack' team of archaeologists dug, on a hunch, next to other sites which had yielded many fossils in the past. "We were digging in the place where we always find all the skulls, and lo and behold, we found another miraculous chapter in the story of primitive humankind," Fullerton said.

The skull, an early hominid, probably of the *Australopithecus* genus, has been nicknamed "Steve" by the plucky anthropologist and "Ho-fucking-hum" privately by the National Geographic reporter that once-upon-a-time made a few bad choices at the company Christmas party and ended up in reporting hell.

The skull looks like every other *Australopithecine* skull except that it has a small bump on the jaw, just below the incisors. It is estimated by everyone except my editors and Fullerton that this bump had absolutely no function whatsoever.

"This will solve all sorts of questions about where we've been, where we're going, and why we are here," said Fullerton, obviously lying. "It's a very different type of human than you or I, or any other bipedal ape ancestor with all of the same features as

BY SAM MROSLA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LINDA ZANN



Fullerton and Australopithecus "Steve." Millions of years old and do I care? No.

this skull that we've found," Fullerton said, her eyes mockingly shining with a joy that I can no longer feel. Growing tired of Fullerton, I chose not to dignify her response with further questions, but the chirpy little pixie kept talking anyway.

"If you dressed Mr. *Australopithecus* Steve here in a tuxedo and took him to a dinner party, he'd look very strange indeed."

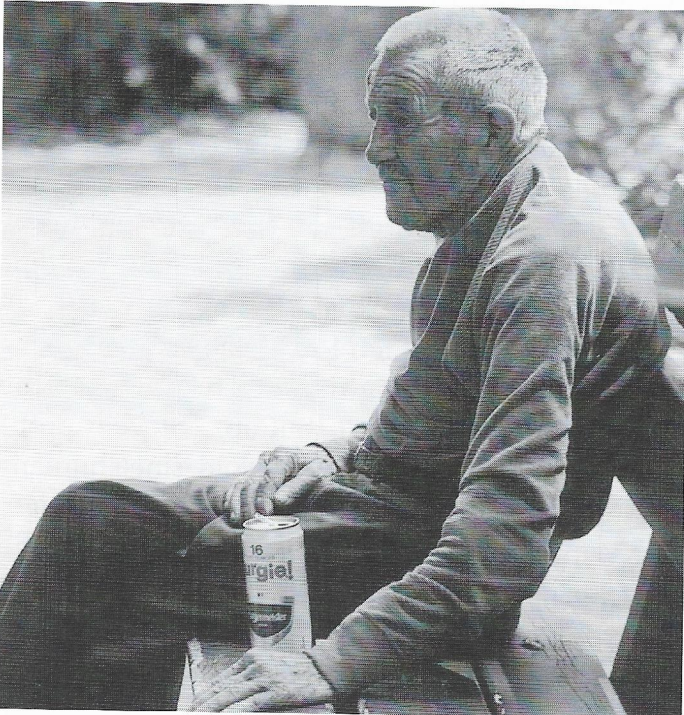
Even though I made a very exaggerated show of turning the tape recorder off, the woman just wouldn't shut up. "Steve is probably about 1-6 million years old, since humans first appeared about 6 million years ago. Without carbon-dating, we can't be sure," she explained to the air, as I had already left the site to engage in heavy drinking.

MISSOURI:

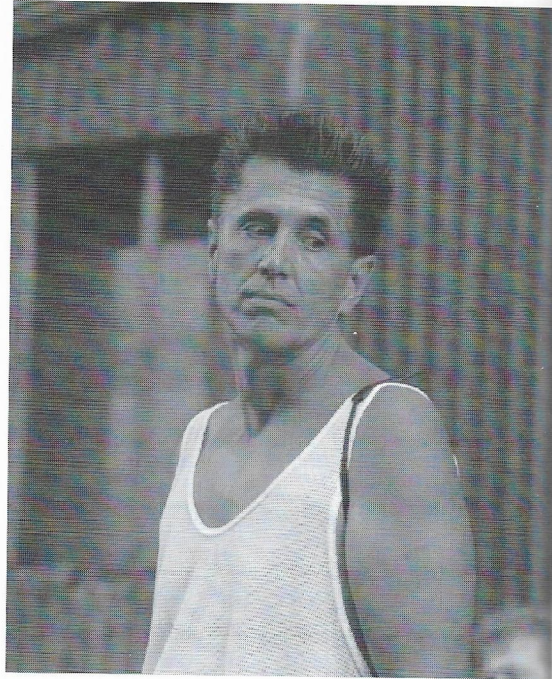
One hundred and eighty-two years after the Missouri Compromise,

BY FENDER MACQUAIL

Dale Saunders, 55, is a roofer from Carthage, Missouri. As a teen, he showed real promise in his schooling, and planned to attend the University of Missouri-Rolla, the most prestigious Mizzou campus after Mizzou Columbia, Mizzou St. Louis and, of course, Mizzou Kansas City. Senior prom found an apparently unwitting Dale conceiving a child with Jeanette Harcourt, a young girl with whom he had been previously unaffiliated. With a new baby, Dale found himself unable to make the three hour drive (up 44, through Lebanon) to Rolla, so he enrolled in Ozarks Technical Community College in nearby Springfield.



Dale Saunders, compromised, takes a break from his roofing career.



Spuds Wilkerson, pondering his literal and metaphorical state of compromise.

When the United States Senate compromised to admit the large, unexceptional state to the Union in 1820, they set a damning precedent: Missouri's future generations would lead lives of sacrifice, despair, and, always, compromise.

For Henry Clay, the principal architect of the antebellum agreement, the act ended the spread of slavery north of 36'30", the southern border of Missouri. But there would be no "southern border" to the depths of disillusionment felt by men like Spuds

LAND OF COMPROMISE

the people of Missouri remain a people compromised.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA BACANTIN, JR.

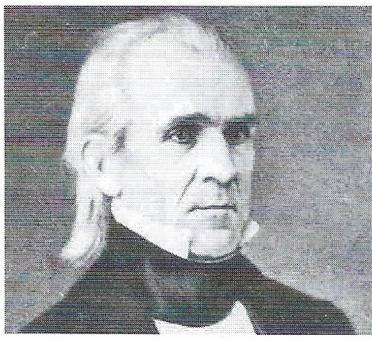
Wilkerson, 47, a former bailbondsman's secretary who is now between jobs. Spuds hoped to take over his father's prairie dog extermination service in Mexico—a northeastern Missouri town eerily reminiscent of its notorious namesake—before he lost his right foot jerry-rigging a sidecar for his tractor with a stroller and a glue gun. Spuds' ancestors rejoiced when they became the 24th state; we must now ask: *you have your statehood, but at how high a cost?*

The Missouri Compromise was repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854; Missourians like Dale and Spuds, however, who pray to God every morning for a personal Kansas-Nebraska Act, will never see their severe compromises repealed.

Missouri entered the Union as a slave state only after Maine was admitted as a free one. As the contrast between Maine and Missouri proves, the compromise was all Missouri's. Francis Huffington, 82, of Orono, is a typical Mainer: while attending Yale University, he married Miss New England, won the America's Cup, meliorated the inequities of capitalism, and placed third at the International Young Violinist's Championship in Prague. Never having had to face a trade-off or make a virtue of necessity, Huffington mused on his luck while having his cake and eating it, too: "Dashingly lucky it wasn't the Maine Compromise, eh?"



We compromised and put both Missouri residents on the same page, but he deserved his own.



James K. Polk
"54-40 or fight!"

"54 - 40 or FIGHT"

"54-40 or Fight"

In 1844, James K. Polk wins the presidency with this slogan, which threatens the British with war if they refuse to cede the Oregon territory as far north as the southern border of Alaska, the 54th parallel.

"54-40 or Fisticuffs"

The British respond to Polk in 1845 with this famous slogan, which asserts their claim to the land and threatens to take up their cudgels in a dignified show of gentlemanly joust-abouting to ensure that it remains in British hands.

"54-50 or [We'll] Fire [at your soldiers and civilians]"

In a hurry to defend the American prerogative in the Oregon territory, Polk announced this ill-conceived slogan two weeks later. The *New York Old-Timey Tymes* pounces upon Polk, writing that "at first glance, Mr. Polk's present pronouncement preserves the poetic parlance which promoted him to the Presidency. Upon closer inspection, however, he has simply used a crass set of 'brackets' to circumvent the rules of artful alliteration. Shame splotches our States."

"54-40 or Foment a Phenomenal Fracas"

In 1847, Britain dispatches a thoughtful reply penned by the English poet laureate, the alliteratively-appellated William Wordsworth. All of England swoons at Wordsworth's powerful dictum. "Not all of the words beginne with the same Letter, indeed, yet they all beginne with the same *soundes*," notes the impressed *Old-Timey Tymes Literary Supplement*.

"54-40 or Fwar"

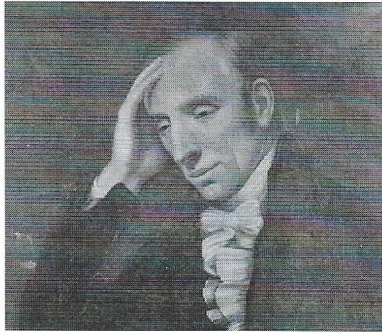
Struck by William Wordsworth's innovative alliteration, Polk recruits the youthful and alliterative Walt Whitman to draft a similar effort. America's literati are quick to point out that Whitman's experimental decision to add an 'F' to the beginning of the word 'war' may, in fact, maintain the alliteration, but it changes the meaningful word 'war' into the nonsense word 'fwar.' In response, Whitman claims that the initial 'F' is obviously a 'silent F,' and is not pronounced.

"54-40 or Forsake Fellatio, Flaccid Fancylass"

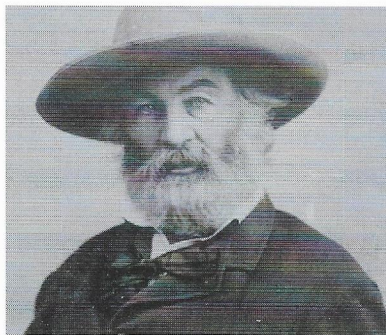
Wordsworth's 1848 reply disparages Whitman's flamboyant homosexuality with the favored homophobic epithet of the time, 'fancylass.' The first part of the slogan refers to Britain's threats of a retaliatory strike, the Portland Pansy-Porn Party, in which the British army proposes to dress up like Indians and throw a whole shipment of Walt Whitman's explicit homosexual pornography into the Portland harbor.

"54-40 or Fuck Off, Cocksuckers"

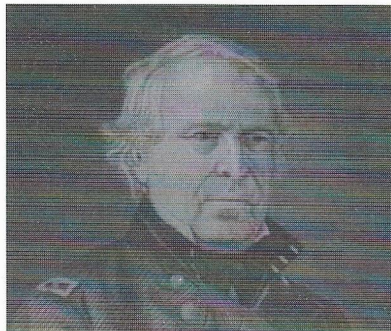
Polk, a lame-duck in the late fall of 1848 and thus no longer interested in public opinion, offers this brash reply, escalating the struggle and paving the way for Gen. Zachary Taylor's celebrated first inaugural address, "You're Fucked, Incompetent British Navy."



William Wordsworth
"54-40 or Foment a Phenomenal Fracas"



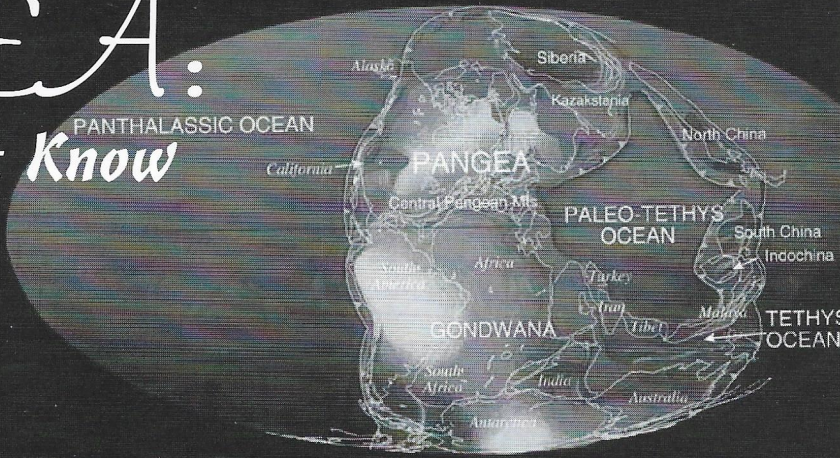
Walt Whitman
"54-40 or Fwar"



Zachary Taylor
"You're Fucked, Incompetent British Navy"

PANGEA:

What You Didn't Know



BY DRAKE JONQUIL V
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHY GUNSWORTH

© 1997 C. R. Sc

When the continents are smacked together, everything is crazy. Can you imagine a land where dogs ride horses?

Well, I can. Because it existed.

These horse riding dogs were pirates of the Pangean plains, stealing their weight in booty each day.

Pooches on caballos? No way? Well it happened.

On Pangea. The big floating continent.

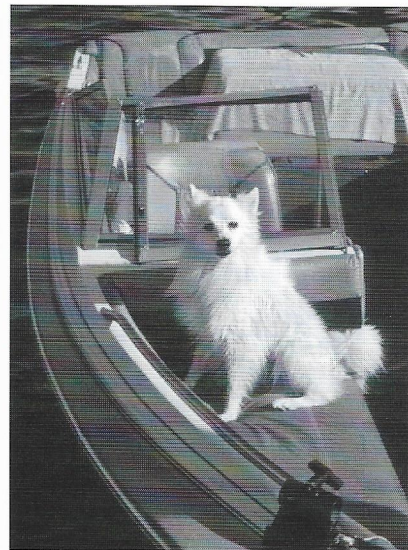
Haberdashers? Get out. Not wanted on Pangea. Dandies? Come on in. Horse riding dog pirates needed dandies to care for their children and tend shoppe. Shoppe? Oh, did I forget? The Shoppes at Pangea were some of the most popular shoppes on pangea. Besides boasting dandies as salespeople, they specialized in sell-

ing one thing: Pangea T-Shirts with the slogan "I love Pangea coz it's all we got!" on them. These shirts sold by the dozens. And at three days of bootyweight apiece, they were a steal.

But Pangea had its ugly side. The cruise line business was all but dead. Dandies and dog pirates looking to go on a cruise to exotic locales were disappointed when they realized that there was only one place to go. There was also a strict no horse riding rule on the cruise liners.

What else would you EXPECT from Pangea?

PANGEA!

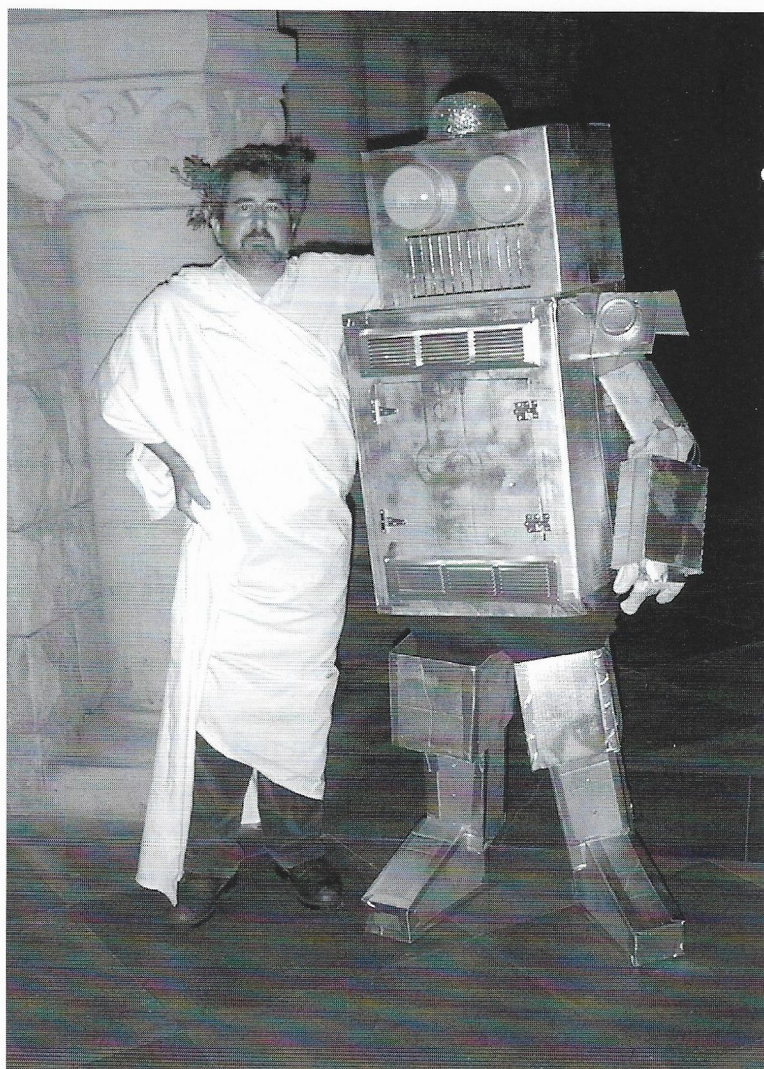


A dog pirate of Pangea forlornly rides a Pangean cruise liner.

"Where am I going?" he said. "Back."

Triumphs of Pangean popular culture and artistic expression.

Hjem til Pangea!
af Willy Wegner og Henning Rønn



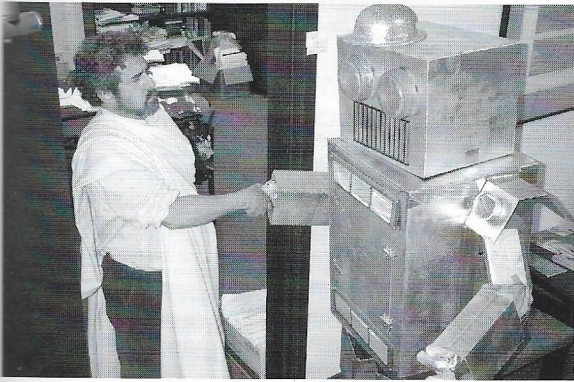
THE CLASSICS DEPARTMENT EMBRACES MODERNITY

BY WALTER SCOTT ASPIAN

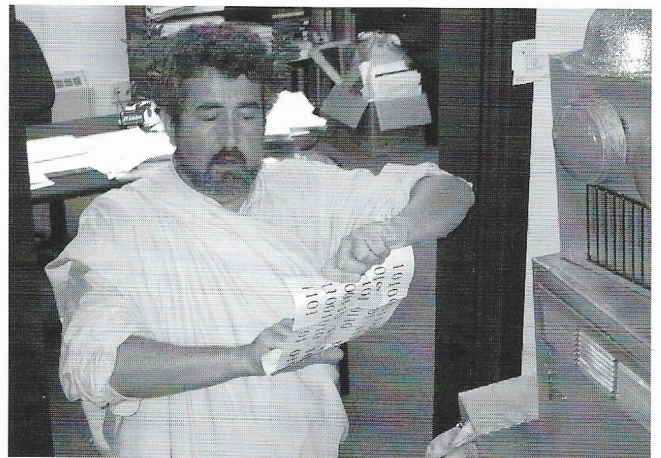
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG VAN WAGNER



Continuing coverage of the Modern-o-bot 2000's extended mission to herald modernity into all corners of the world, National Geographic is proud to report the most recent triumph of modernity over antiquity. Even though the end result was the Classics Department finally accepting all that is modern, this mission proved to be the Modern-o-bot 2000's most challenging one to date.

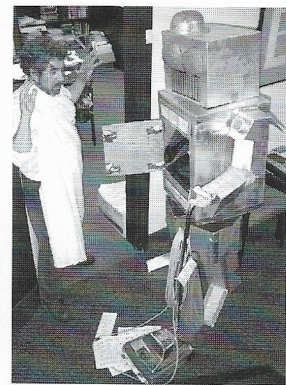
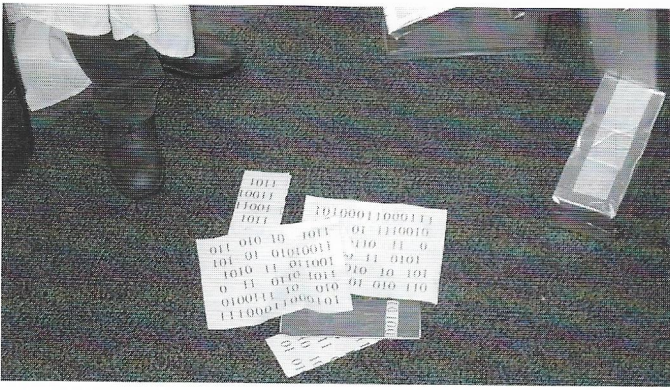


Left, clockwise from top: The Modern-o-bot 2000 psyches itself up for the upcoming confrontation. It meets Professor Richard Martin, the chair of the Classics Department and the one man that it has to convince to sway the staunchly antique department over to the side of modernity. Although the introductory handshake is jovial on the surface; anxiety, mistrust, respect, anger, and fear all lie seething beneath.



Above, left to right: After dispensing with pleasantries, the Modern-o-bot 2000 immediately launches into the hard-sell by starting a short multi-media presentation about the benefits of modernity featuring a rousing speech, the theme song from Quantum Leap, and pamphlets created instantly on the Modern-o-bot 2000's internal printer. Unfortunately, Professor Martin neither reads binary nor understands the non-scroll format of the pamphlets.





Previous page, lower right:

Ignorance can't last as a deterrent to the Modern-o-bot 2000's computronic might forever and Professor Martin is taught the correct way to read a modern pamphlet. Martin craftily pretends to understand the binary language and almost succeeds in dismissing the Modern-o-bot by promising to "think about it" and "get back to [the Modern-o-bot 2000] later." However, before the Modern-o-bot leaves, its sensors detect disingenuousness. Immediately changing tactics, the Modern-o-bot 2000 swats the pamphlets to the floor, much to the shock of Professor Martin.



Above, left to right:

"How will your precious modernity clean this mess up?" sneers Professor Martin. In response, the Modern-o-bot 2000 simply pulls a vacuum cleaner, a modern device for cleaning up messes, out of its chest cavity and quickly remedies the situation. Professor Martin is astounded and frightened by the noisy, yet time-saving, vacuum cleaner.

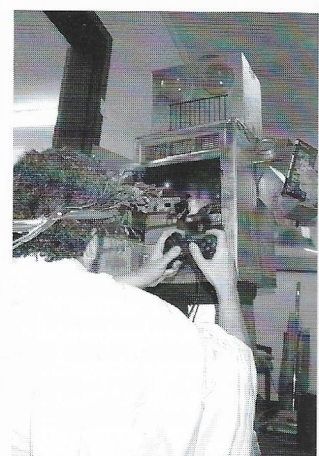
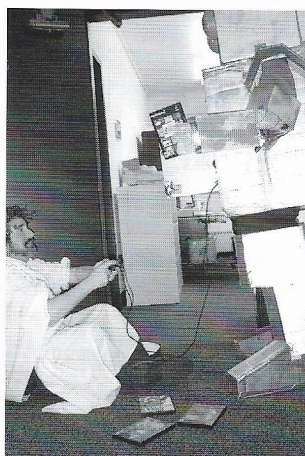
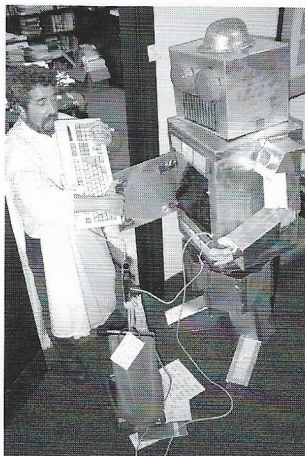


Left, inset:

Sensing his imminent defeat, Professor Martin tries to corrupt the Modern-o-bot 2000 with foul antiquity.

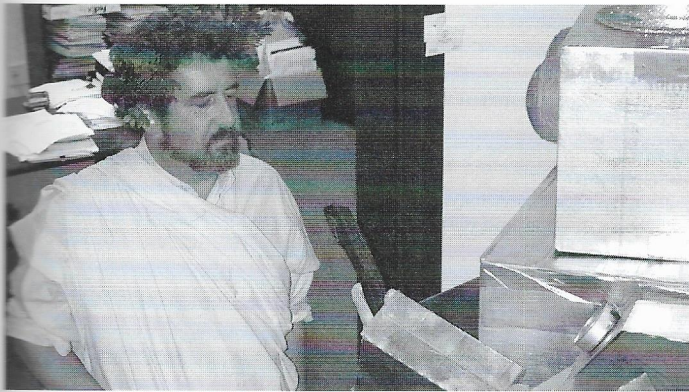
Left:

However, the Modern-o-bot 2000 has no such weakness. It just chuckles its cold, electronic chuckle and reformats the ancient book into "The Modern Woman's Guide to Life."



Above, left to right:

Having gained the upper hand, the Modern-o-bot 2000 presses its advantage by introducing Professor Martin to a variety of modern objects in rapid succession. Martin is puzzled by some objects, such as the keyboard that he tried to eat, yet takes to the latest video games immediately.



Above, counterclockwise from top:

The Modern-o-bot becomes aware that victory is in sight and prepares for the coup de grace. It introduces Professor Martin to the remote control, a very powerful modern device that changes things into other, different things. By using the forces of modernity to transform a potted plant into a bowl full of cold beer, the Modern-o-bot finally wins over Professor Martin.

Right:

Trading hats and pledging eternal friendship between the Classics Department and modernity cements the Modern-o-bot 2000's victory over anti-progressive antiquity.

There is a small amount of celebration before the Modern-o-bot 2000 must leave the now friendly territory of the Classics Department in order to continue spreading the light of modernity throughout the world.



Papua

New Guinea:

Stolen Signs Result in Catastrophe

BY BRENT OSLOMANN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PILSNY RICHARD

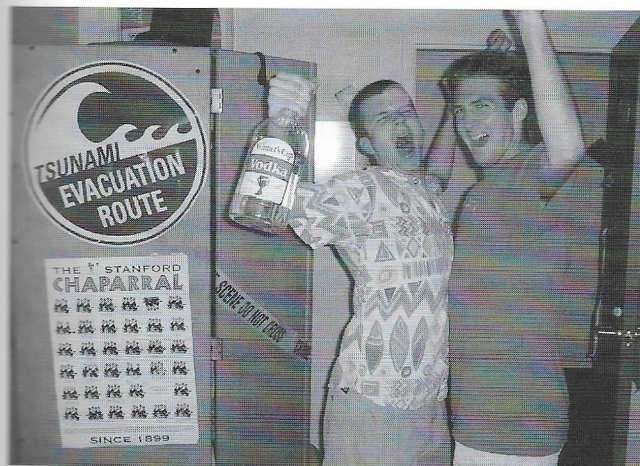
I stand virtually alone in what was once the most highly populated pocket of West Sepik province. The enormity of what happened almost defies description. About 4000 deaths due to the tsunami in Papua New Guinea have been confirmed, but thousands of people still are not accounted for. But there is something worse about this disaster, something more horrific. It is only when I talked to the survivors that I realized that most of the people that died could have been saved if only the tsunami evacuation route signs hadn't been stolen.

"When we first saw the tsunami coming, we immediately ran for the evacuation routes," survivor Ita Atopi recounts, "everyone knew where they started. As children, we are taught a sing-sing about what to do in a tsunami." She then began to sing "When tsunami comes to town/only follow signs/do not drown/signs will lead you all to safety/only follow signs/follow signs hastily." Atopi continued, "Without the signs marking the routes we didn't know where to go. Only follow signs, only follow [sob-

bing] signs. What are we to do when the signs are gone? Then there was [sobbing] water, so, so [sobbing] much water." Touched by her heartfelt confusion, I vowed as a journalist and as a member of the National Geographic Society to dig deeper.

I learned that authorities in Papua New Guinea suspect American college students, hungry for amusing trinkets to hang in their dorm rooms, are responsible for the missing signs. I feel personal revulsion for the youth of my country when I hear this fact. Perhaps if the American students could see what their blind greed has wrought, they would despise themselves as well. Somehow I doubt that. Confronted with the vast





devastation and wasted human life, I can't understand how two square feet of interestingly covered wallspace could justify stealing tsunami evacuation route signs to anyone.

"I can sort of understand why these kids think it would be okay to steal the signs," Colonel Jacob Bruno, the local emergency boss, confided in me, "I mean, the things were placed every two feet or so. These villagers can be pretty forgetful about important things like evacuation routes. Frankly, we had so many signs around here that I'm amazed the students managed to take all of them." I then asked Col. Bruno why the villagers were so confused about what to do. Why didn't they all just run to safety however they could get there? Col. Bruno responded, "The confusion of the villagers is pretty understandable. We taught them all a sing-sing about what to do in a tsunami. You know, follow the signs and all. Here in PNG we're all pretty stubborn about obeying our sing-sings." Officer Bruno then

Above left: These cheerful fellows are personally responsible for the deaths of hundreds of innocent villagers in Papua New Guinea.

Right: Tsunami survivor, Ita Atopi, can barely choke out the words to the tsunami evacuation sing-sing through her bitter, bitter tears.

Opposite: Papua New Guinea. Evacuation routes are here, but where are the signs?

offered to sing. I declined his offer.

So this is the aftermath of the deadly confusion a tacky American need for dorm-life decor caused. For much of the length of the spit there is no life left. The village of Arop, home to 2500 people, is gone; Warapu, home to another 2500, does not exist any more; two-thirds of Sissano (2000 people) and most of Malol (3500 people) have been obliterated. Many of the surviving adults have been robbed of their children, just as many of the surviving children have been robbed of their parents. I can only shake with quiet rage.

When it comes to new tsunami evacuation route signs for the villages, they will be replaced in time. The missionaries, officials, and others will rally around with tools and equipment. But what about life? It's one thing to assemble the materials for a new route, signs to lead the way, and extra security to keep the horrid, avaricious American college students away. But how long will it take to heal the pain in the hearts of the villagers? Colonel Jacob Bruno has an answer, "For a long time there will be silence. No sing-sing."



Rustics

BY HANDEL PORTSMOUTH
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAPT. TIM QUINTAN

Lost part of America found

America's heartland is quite a place. It's a place where one can still occasionally get a Dr. Pepper for a dime and a smile. A place where women wear calico and men bring in the supper with a .22. A place where children attend one-room schoolhouses powered by donkeys.

It is here I had my assignment. To enter the heart of Rustic America, and learn just how primitive it still was. What were its values? What was its future? I had high hopes that my ethnographic study could reveal truths about society at large through these simple, wonderful, toothless people.



Rustics, charming in their rusticity.

I was roused before sunrise then next morning by Marshall Jessup, my guide to the rustics. After a meal of pancakes ("flapjackies") at the local diner, cleverly labeled "Eats" in order to attract rustics, Marshall and I set off to meet the other inhabitants.

Lulu Diane, 37, is one of the key rustics, uncomfortable but traditional in her Levi britches and country blouse. She must bring in the hay, milk the cows, and take eggs from sometimes reluctant chickens every morning. She must mind to the sprats and young 'uns. Marshall assures me, there's a difference.

"I don't hold with loafers," she cackles, handing me a broom. I sweep the floor in the traditional "back-and-forth" rustic manner, anxious to help this remarkable woman and earn my stripes as a True Rustic. Marshall whittles a toothpick out of a hickory switch whittled out of a baseball bat. After a while, the floor looks spotless, save for the pile of discarded toothpicks underneath Marshall.



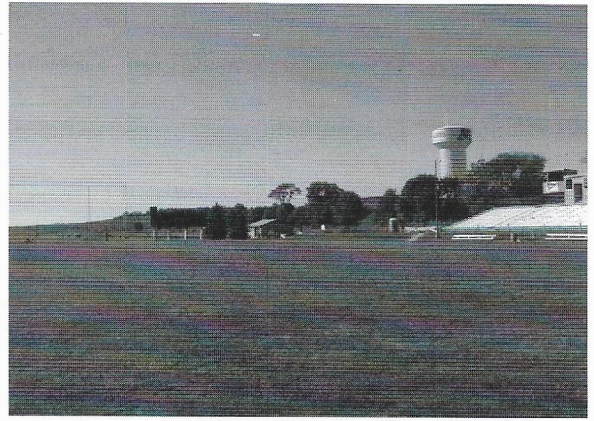
"You can't trust those varmints," said Earl Scrupp, 94. "Them varmints are something fierce." Scrupp has spent the last 90 years doing away with varmints— a lone cowboy, a dying breed, a great American spirit.

"That's not clean!" Diane cries, laughing. "You city boys're all alike. T'aint clean 'less the pigs kin eat off of it."

She whistles through the gap in her teeth and Lurvey and Purvey, the prize hogs, come in to inspect the room. Throwing slops on the floor, the pigs eagerly defecate on it and then roll in the mess.

"Wall, y'got off lucky this time, city boy," Diane says, giving her baby Georgie to the pigs to care for.

Marshall and I continue to the general store, where Gasper Gasperson, proprietor-at-large and mayor of the Rustic town, stands in front of his counter like a true elder statesman.



This 129-mile long stretch of field is known as the "green field" by the rustics, who sweat and love and laugh in its verdant groves.

"Sody pop, misters?" he asks. "Where y'headed?"

I explain we are reporter and guide, here to investigate their rustic lifestyle.

"Looks like rain," Gasperson said. "Reckon it's good for the garden, tho."

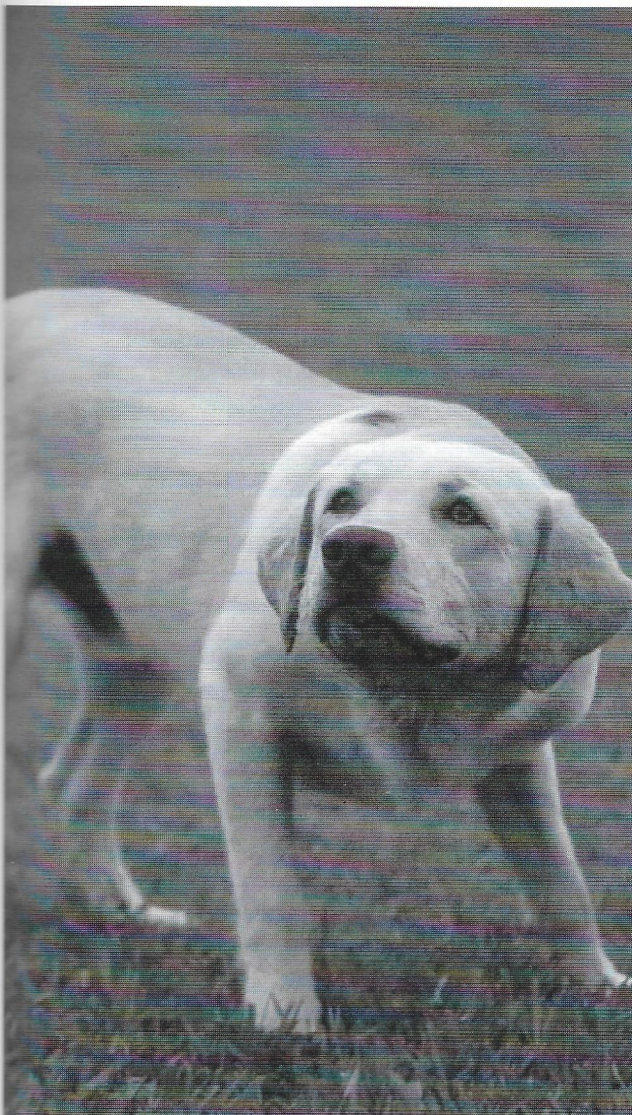
I ask him how being a rustic mayor is. "Knee high by the fourth of July," he proclaims, and we leave him quickly, shocked by the simple truth.

Soon, my day with the Rustics is over. As I leave the Rustic area for the New York skyline, I have to wonder: Was the rustic life better? Are our fast-paced, technology-driven city lives really as fulfilling as the simple pleasures of "whittlin' and spittlin'?"

I must confess, I felt my teeth begin to gap in reply.

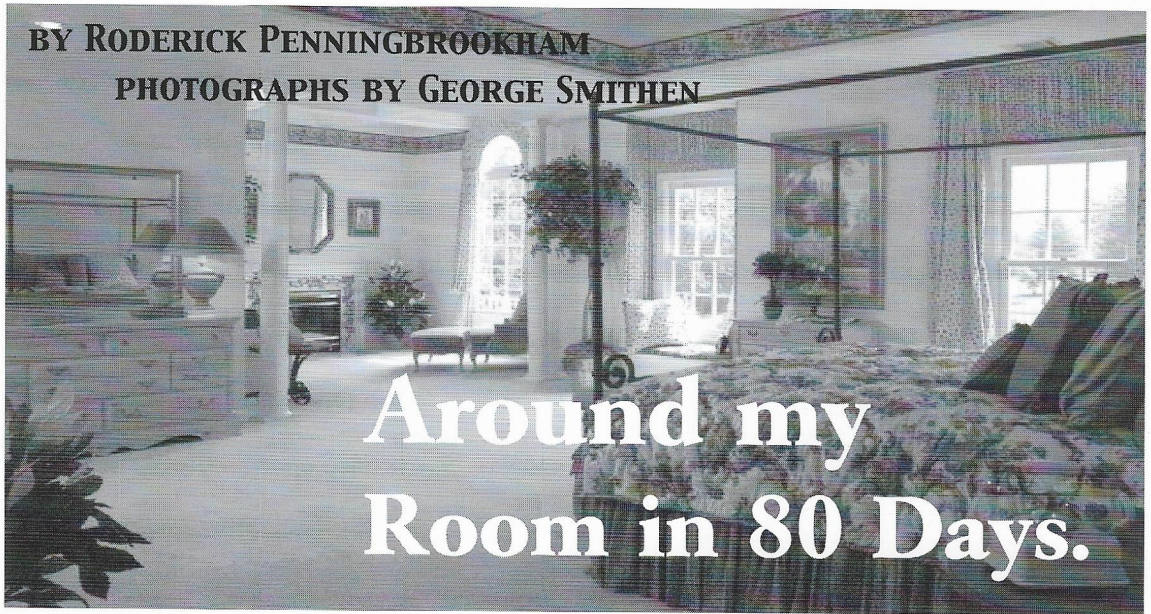
HANDEL PORTSMOUTH has long been fascinated by the rustic lifestyle. After majoring in agriculture and communication, he sought the job of covering rustics because "it was a job."

CAPT. TIM QUINTAN was free that day.



Rustic dogs can smell city-folk, the men say.

BY RODERICK PENNINGBROOKHAM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE SMITHEN



Around my Room in 80 Days.

I have resolved to traverse my boudoir in the span of fourscore days, at the bidding of my old cronies at the gentlemen's club. I daresay they have made a wager that my inherent laziness and ineptitude will prevent me from spanning my room in 80 days.

I set off on George Smithen's day, George Smithen being my manservant whose day off I cancelled for the expedition. We all must make sacrifices, I tell him.

"Yes, sir," he replies.

He packs me out of my bed and onto an elephant we have hired for the journey. I now find my room somewhat cramped, and so I decide to resume sleeping. Smithen reminds me that we have but 79 days to go, but I wave him away with my fetching wand.

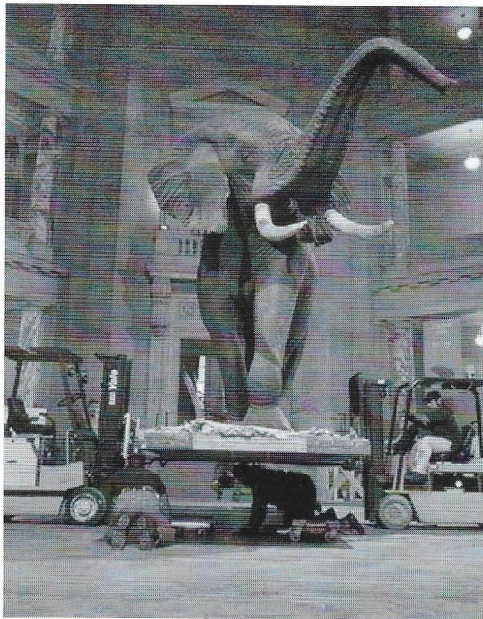
I find the sleeping sickness has taken me again, and so I allow for another six days of rest.

And then a seventh, to honor our Creator who hath blessed me with this remarkable adventure.

The elephant has become a bit rowdy, and so I feel it is time to depart. I ring for Smithen, and he dresses me in my finest country togs. We reach the closet by nightfall and make base camp, setting a fire on the ground. We are choked by the dastardly smoke, and are forced to ring for the marshals to extinguish it.

After several days of rest and dealing with additional manservants repairing the carpet so that my journey 'round my room will be a plush one, Smithen and I resume our travels. Within a week of sordid adventures and escapades, we have reached the armchair which sits in front of my fireplace.

We learn the bridge to the other chair is out, or in fact never existed and so once again must stop our journey. I have Smithen pay two locals – he has named them "mouse" and "rat" (he has such a capacity for





speaking native tongues, I discover) – and in return they agree to show us another route.

One week later, we are hopelessly lost in the dark recesses of the wallboards. Mouse and Rat nibble on insulation. Smithen attempts to find other guides secretly, but I am convinced that Mouse and Rat shall show us the way.

We emerged unscathed on the other side of the house some month later. "This is not my room!" I shout, beating Smithen within an inch of his life. After a calming meal of brandy and cigars, we resume the traveling, attempting to scale the side of the house, go over the roof, and re-enter my abode.

But the roof proves too much for the elephant, who crashes through it with dramatic aplomb. This is a happy accident, for he has opened up the way back into my room.

From there, we proceed onward. I have decided to stake my hopes on the way through the dresser, scaling its majestic drawers to find the best vantage point for us to proceed. Or, rather, Smithen scaled the drawers, was startled at seeing himself at the top of the world in the dresser mirror, and fell to his doom down the peak. While

I was napping in grief, the beast, unfettered now that Smithen was no longer chained to its trunk, escaped to another point in my room.

"Dash it all!" I say. "Without a manservant and elephant, one can never hope to go around one's room." As if to prove this point true, I ate a large meal and fell asleep again with only a very non-Smithens brandy bottle to comfort me.

When I awoke, I realized that 80 days had elapsed. Morale was low at base camp. Things appear to have taken a grim turn, until I realized none of the old boys had actually witnessed our journeys. I simply decided to tell them that I had made it around my room in 80 days, rushing to the club and making a tidy sum off the old boys.

I muse wistfully that the world is a smaller place than it once was, particularly when people like me are living in it. I am voted chairman of the club.



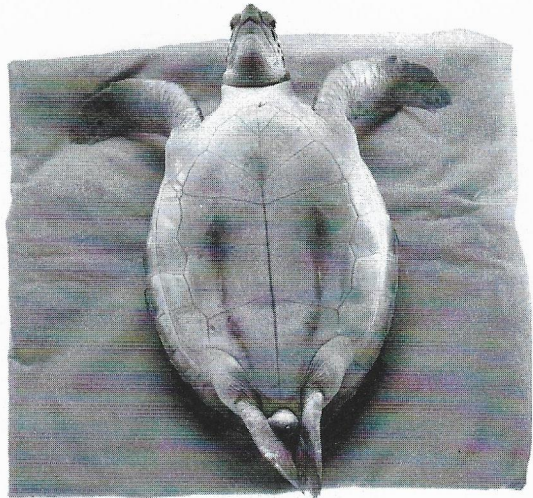
Opposite, bottom:
We load the elephant, that magnificent beast, into my foyer.

Above:
Rat emerges from the insulation to blaze the trail further.

Below:
The dresser which cost Smithen his life, and nearly my wager.

TURTLES OF THE WORLD

The World's Wealthiest Turtle



Chelonia M. Mydas, regarded by virtually all experts as the World's Wealthiest Turtle, basks atop her pillow. Despite critics' claims that such reclination will leave her underbelly open to predators, Mydas just laughs and resumes sleeping.

BY MRS. AMELIA T. WINSTEAD

WORLD TURTLE BEAT REPORTER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
LORD PETER WINFIELD

Surrounded by the riches of a lifestyle suited to the elite; the world's wealthiest turtle, *Chelonia M. Mydas*, relaxes after a hard day of work managing her assets. It takes a lot of dedication and determination for a simple back country turtle to reach the lofty heights that Ms. Mydas has. While cradled in a luxurious pillow obtained through years of hard work laying eggs and digging in the sand, Ms. Mydas reflects on how she is able to hire others to do her work for her.

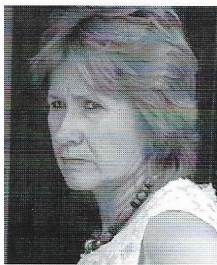
"Many turtles would gladly dig themselves bloody for a few moments on such a fine, soft cushion like this one that I possess," she muses, "and they do. Oh, how they do."

Indeed, the vast and cushy wealth of Ms. Mydas swaddles her from the harsh conditions most turtles toil under. Even so, Ms. Mydas occasionally breaks from managing her spongy, silken business empire to ponder the plight of the working-turtle.

"It must be so hard for them to relax

without any downy softness under their tired shells," she laments. "Sometimes while I nap, I dream a glorious dream where all turtles own fine restive aids like my wonderful pillow. But this dream is impossible. How would the work get done? No one would ever want to lay eggs or dig in the sand again."

Indubitably, Ms. Mydas truly has a firm grasp on her fluffy situation. She is only the world's wealthiest turtle because she possesses one thing—a soft and comfortable pillow.



MRS. AMELIA T. WINSTEAD has been covering turtles for NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC since 1981, when the Falkland Island conflict displaced several Argentinian snapping turtles to Antarctica. The turtles all died of frostbite, but Mrs. Schaeffer ran their miserable fate in by deadline for a Pulitzer Prize and the more-coveted prize of National Geographic World Turtle Beat Reporter.

She is the proud author of two novels: *Turtles, Tortoises, and Tragedy* and *Hind Flippers in High Places: My Life as a Turtle Beat Reporter*, slated to be published by Random House in July 2002. In addition, she has personally interviewed over 2000 turtles.

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The National Geographic Society

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES, APRIL 12, 2002

BY TANNSWITH THWICKMERSTHY, SECRETARY

5:00 PM

The meeting is scheduled to begin.

5:27 PM

The meeting starts after the last few board members trickle in (right).

5:34 PM

The phone rings. It is for Captain Edgar Wilanthrope (below).

5:36 PM

The meeting resumes after Captain Wilanthrope ends his phone call with a curt "Goodbye." Discussion of the magazine begins.



5:38 PM

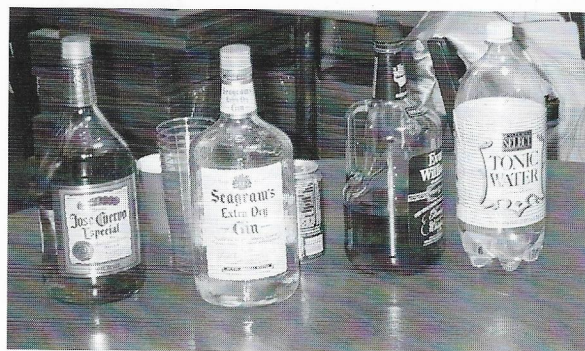
Discussion of the magazine effectively ends.

6:19 PM

Refreshments are served (below).

6:55 PM

The man with whom Captain Edgar Wilanthrope spoke to earlier arrives. He is carrying pizza, a small vessel labeled "flask," a tennis racket, and is wearing the bottom half of a woman's business suit.



6:58 PM

A motion is made to adjourn the meeting immediately.

6:58 PM

Motion to adjourn meeting denied.

7:18 PM

President and Chairmen of The National Geographic Society Gilbert Canby berates the two board members responsible for the motion to adjourn the meeting (right).

8:50 PM

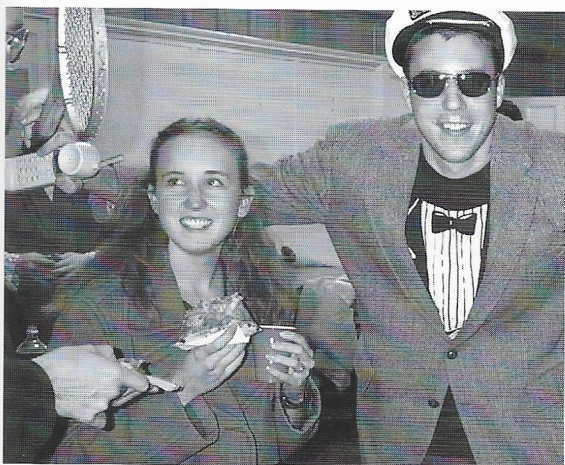
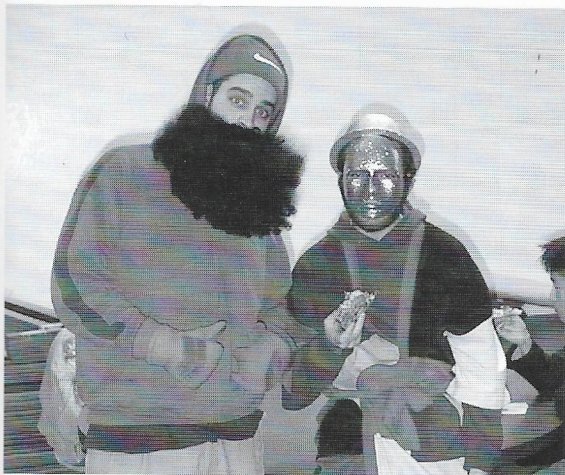
All is forgiven.

8:51 PM

A motion is made to go hog wild, National Geographic Society-style.

8:52 PM

Motion approved (below).



Nuts: The Wood You Can Eat.

Too much cellulose in that wood to eat it comfortably? Not so with nuts!

With nuts, you can finally realize your dream of eating wood and things made from wood.

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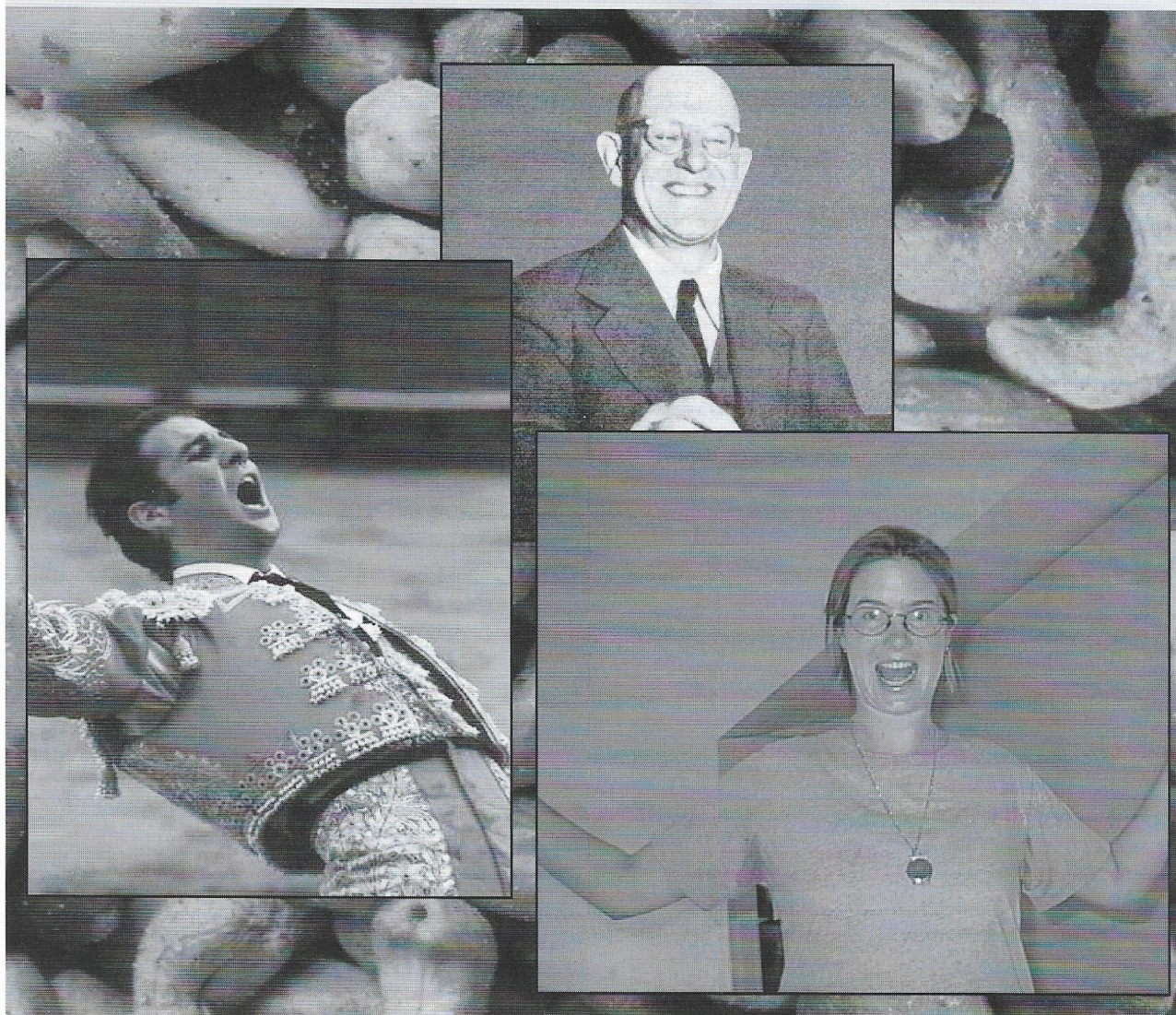
What if you were to take a bunch of peanuts and press them into a block and then carve that block into a statue? I bet all your friends would think that it was wooden statue. I bet they'd be surprised to see you eating that wooden statue. More ambitious folk might even try carving their peanut block into a coffee table, or using different kinds of nuts.

So what are you waiting for?

I don't see any reason why you shouldn't be buying pounds upon pounds of delicious nuts right at this very moment!

Remember: nuts are like wood in every possible way, except that you can eat them.

Paid for by The Nut Council of America

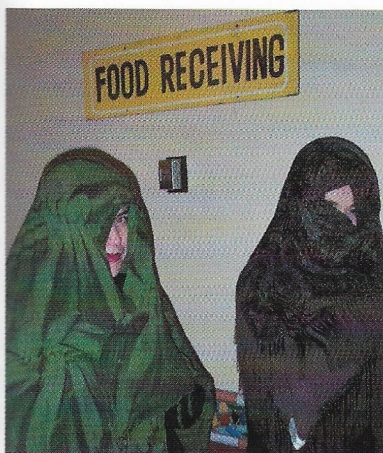


On Assignment

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE



Above: Amu Darya is entertained by the American band we brought to amuse her during the photo shoot. Left: local women waiting to receive food nearby eye us suspiciously. Below: a mean local man teaches his wife the ins and outs of American geography. "I know everything about your country and your culture," he proclaims. "Did you know Texas applied to be a state eight times?"



THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

- 2 Digital AudioCamera.....Huetter
- 3 Now That.....Bender
- 4 Table of Contents.....Schaeffer
- 6 Forum.....Stockman, Young, Steinberg
- 6 Our Readers.....Yelderman
- 8 World's Largest Penny.....Bender
- 10 Another Cute Culture.....Bender
- 12 Geography Bee.....Yelderman
- 13 Goddamn Skull.....Huetter
- 14 Missouri.....Lewis-Kraus
- 16 "54-40 or Fight!".....Lewis-Kraus
- 17 Pangea.....Perry, Steinberg
- 18 Modernity.....Schaeffer
- 22 Papua New Guinea.....Schaeffer
- 24 Rustics.....Huetter
- 26 80 Days.....Huetter
- 28 World's Wealthiest Turtle.....Schaeffer
- 29 Subscribe!.....Lessac-Chenen
- 30 Meeting Minutes.....Calderón
- 32 Nuts: Wood You Can Eat.....Schaeffer
- 33 On Assignment.....Bender
- 34 Backyard Wonders.....Young, Yelderman

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